

we have seen an explosion in advertising. Unfortunately, what has happened is we have seen that explosion in advertising causing an explosion in our costs of 18 percent to 20 percent a year.

Something is wrong when there are almost twice as many people involved in promoting a drug and advertising a drug as there are people researching new medications. There is also something wrong when we can go across the bridge or through the tunnel to Canada—Mr. President, that is 5 minutes in Michigan. We can go across the bridge and we can cut our costs in half for American-made, FDA-approved medications.

I have twice taken a group of seniors across the border, going through the Canadian medical society, and then going into the Canadian pharmacies. We have seen dramatic results. I will just share a couple.

In Michigan, Zocor, a drug to reduce cholesterol, costs \$109.73 for 50 5-milligram tablets. In Canada, the exact same prescription costs \$46.17—\$109.73 and \$46.17. Since we as taxpayers in the United States have helped to subsidize the research—which I support doing—I also want to see us get a price break for the tax dollars that are helping to do this.

I also know that tamoxifen, a breast-cancer-treating drug, is available for about \$136 in Michigan. When we went to Canada, with breast cancer patients, they got it for \$15. There is something wrong with the laws that say our people cannot freely go back and forth—our hospitals, our businesses—and get those lower costs.

There is something wrong with a system where small businesses are seeing 25, 30, 35 percent or more increases in their health care premiums. I have had small business people come to me saying they will have to drop their insurance because they cannot afford the premium increases. The majority of that is the cost of prescription drugs.

We have a lot of work to do. There is something wrong in a country as blessed and as wealthy as the United States when there are seniors who got up this morning, sat at the kitchen table, and said: Do I eat today or do I take my medicine? Do I pay the electric bill or do I take my medicine?

We can do better than that. We have an obligation to do better than that. I believe one piece of that is Medicare coverage and updating our Medicare system to cover prescription drugs. But I believe it is also much more than that. I believe it is making generics available once the patent has run its course and finding ways to make sure those laws are enforced and not undermined. It is making sure that research is done, and we reward and help fund that, and invest in that more than we are investing in advertising. It is making sure our business community can afford premiums, that we have competition across the border, making sure we are able to provide prescriptions at the lowest possible cost while still al-

lowing important research to happen and our pharmaceutical industry to thrive.

I believe we can do all of that if we have a focus on the right values and priorities when it comes to this debate.

I simply say it is now time for a sense of urgency. If a child in our family is sick or if we have a parent who needs lifesaving medication and can't afford it, if we have someone in our family who needs an operation, we feel a sense of urgency. We feel a sense of urgency if someone needs nursing home care or if someone needs some other kind of health care.

We need that same kind of sense of urgency when it comes to public policy on health care.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join with us in the coming weeks to lower the fastest growing part of that health care dollar; that is, the cost of prescription drugs and lifesaving medication.

We can do better than we are doing for our seniors and our families. We can do better than we are doing for the business community. We can do better than we are doing for everybody in our country if we are willing to get to work. I hope we are going to do that.

I yield the floor.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senator from Missouri completes her statement, Senator MURKOWSKI be recognized to offer his Iraqi oil import amendment; that there be 60 minutes for debate prior to the vote in relation to the amendment with the time equally divided and controlled in the usual form; that there be no intervening amendment in order prior to the vote in relationship to the Murkowski amendment; that upon the use or yielding back of the time without further intervening action or debate the Senate proceed to vote in relation to the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order to ask for the yeas and nays on the amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CORZINE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

LEAVE NO CHILD BEHIND ACT

Mrs. CARNAHAN. Mr. President, last year, Democrats and Republicans joined together with President Bush to enact a monumental and far-reaching education bill.

This new law, the Leave No Child Behind Act, will bring new resources and meaningful reform to our Nation's schools.

It establishes new academic standards for students, increases teacher training, and demands new levels of accountability, while increasing flexibility with Federal funds at the State and local level.

I am hopeful that this law will help close the achievement gaps that separate many poor and minority students from their peers.

Indeed, I am optimistic that it will improve education for all students.

But Congress has, as Harry Truman once said, some "unfinished business" when it comes to our schools.

We have left out a critical component when it comes to ensuring that our schools and our teachers and, most importantly, our students will succeed.

Today, one in five schools fails to meet building or safety codes or needs extensive repairs, renovations, and maintenance.

Across the country, run-down, overcrowded, dilapidated schools jeopardize the health and safety of our students.

Across the country, deteriorating schools inhibit the ability of our children to learn.

And yet, with the exception of the Impact Aid program, which I strongly support, the new education reform law did not include funds for school renovation and repair.

Nor were any funds for renovation and repair made available through the appropriations process.

The administration's most recent budget even eliminates the Emergency School Repair Program.

And yet, data from the National Center for Education Statistics tells us that nearly \$127 billion in renovations and repairs are needed to upgrade existing schools to good physical condition.

Furthermore, this figure does not include the funding needed for construction to accommodate increasing enrollments in districts across the country.

We have these pressing needs at a time when resources are scarce. Our States and local governments are still feeling the effects of the recession.

And for too many years, Congress has failed to provide States and localities the funding it promised long ago to share the cost of special education.

The Federal Government cannot ask States and localities to shoulder the burden of school renovation and repair costs alone.

If the Federal Government stands on the sidelines, it will be at the expense of our children.

But neither should Washington attempt to single-handedly solve this problem. Congress should not be in the business of giving direct grants to communities to build schools.

I strongly believe that education is a national priority but a local responsibility.

The legislation being introduced today, the "Investing for Tomorrow's